

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# All THE YEAR ROUND

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## VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."  
IN FIVE BOOKS.

### BOOK V.

#### CHAPTER XI. TEMPEST.

THEIR life in town, however it may have proved to be dust and ashes in Veronica's mouth, was mightily to the taste of her husband. One great drawback to his pleasure at first, was Veronica's perverse determination to be discontented, as he deemed it. What could she desire that she had not? They were rich, young, fond of one another—he at least still loved her, although she seemed resolved to try to cure him of his fondness!—and surrounded by companions who asked nothing better than to be merry and enjoy themselves! What though this dowager had declined to be introduced to her; or that dowdy countess refused her invitations; or that it had hitherto been impossible to find a lady to present her at court? Were not the ladies whom she did know incomparably more lively and amusing than these dull persons? And was it not an incredible perversity in Veronica to long for that which, had it been offered to her—or so Cesare thought—she would have loathed? The husband and wife had many a sharp discussion on this score.

When Veronica now told Cesare that he did not understand this or that, he would argue the point with vivacity. Indeed but he did understand: quite as well as she did; perhaps better! She was but a woman. And if he were a foreigner in England, he yet knew the world, it might be that he even knew the English world, a great deal more thoroughly than she thought for! His friends mauvais genre? Bah! Mrs. Douglas De Raffville was one of the most

fashionable women in London. Lord George, who had introduced her to them, said so! She was at any rate very handsome, very brilliant, and very good-natured: that they could see for themselves. Per Bacco! These simagrées on her part were too amusing! Did she know the history of the withered little duchess with the pearls, to whom she had been so civil at Naples? Then for a day, perhaps, Veronica would break out into wild gaiety. She would be all ablaze with excitement, until even the rather noisy mirth of the society that surrounded her would grow dumb, and its members would stare at her uneasily, or indulge in expressive shrugs and grimaces to each other. These fits of feverish spirits were invariably followed by prolonged depression and gloom; sometimes even by attacks of illness that obliged her to keep her bed for a day or so. But she would see no physician. Her husband, more and more separated from her companionship, and absorbed in his own pursuits, gradually ceased to disquiet himself about these strange fluctuations of health and spirits. There was no one at hand who cared for her. Her father wrote rarely and briefly. Maud was separated from her as though the thickness of the globe were between them.

One afternoon Veronica was lying half asleep on a couch in her boudoir. Her Swiss maid Louise entered the darkened room quietly, and stood listening.

"Is Madame la Princesse asleep?"

"Eh? What is it? My head aches," answered Veronica, in a drowsy voice.

"I should not have ventured to disturb Madame la Princesse, but the gentleman was so importunate that the footman begged me to come and speak with madame."

"A gentleman? I can't see the card by this light. Tell me the name."

"Mistare—Mistare Frost."

"Mr. Frost! Well—yes; let Mr. Frost come up-stairs. Give me the eau-de-cologne. Draw that curtain a little more. No light, no light! Ah, Dio buono, how my head throbs!"

In another minute Mr. Frost was ushered into the boudoir.

"Have I the honour of speaking to the Princess de' Barletti?" asked Mr. Frost, to whom the gloom of the chamber seemed at first almost pitch darkness.

Veronica greeted him, and told him where to find a seat. She half rose from her sofa, but fell back again with a murmur of pain.

"You are suffering? I grieve to intrude. But my business is of such importance—"

"Of such importance?"

"To me of the very deepest."

Veronica poured some eau-de-cologne on her hands, and passed them over her forehead. Then she looked steadily at Mr. Frost, and her eyes, more accustomed to the dimness than his, could perceive that he was changed; bent, and thin, and haggard. And that his restless hands wandered constantly to his mouth, and that he bit his nails furiously. He, for his part, could but just discern the outline of her face and figure.

"Madam," said Mr. Frost, "I will not waste your time or my own—minutes are very precious—by useless preamble. In preferring the request I am about to make, I know that I am doing an unusual—some might say unwarrantable thing. But I am hard pressed: temporarily—only temporarily. And I was to-day inspired suddenly with the hope that you might help me."

"In what way can it be in my power to help you?" said Veronica, in a strange, dreamy voice.

"Will you lend me some money?"

"Lend you some money? I thought you were very rich!"

"I shall be. I am, virtually. But there is a temporary pressure; a severe pressure." Mr. Frost put his hand to his head, as though the pressure he spoke of were there. "I will be frank with you. Women can be compassionate and generous sometimes. If you will lend me the sum I want, you will save me from ruin!"

"From ruin!" Veronica made an effort, and seemed to rouse herself from a lethargy that had apparently benumbed her faculties. Her voice was more like her own as she said, "But can I do this?"

"I think you can. The sum I need is a

large one. But I know your means are large. I want two thousand pounds."

"It is indeed a large sum!"

"If I can have that sum by the end of this month, the rest may go. I shall not care. That is—I mean I shall be safe."

"I should like to do good to somebody," murmured Veronica, half aloud.

"You can do good to more than one person. You know young Lockwood, who is engaged to marry Maud Desmond?"

"Yes: is it for him?"

"You love Maud Desmond, do you not? I have heard that you loved her so much as to offer her a part of your fortune!"

"I do love her. But what—"

"I cannot explain particulars. But I will swear to you by any solemn oath you choose, that in lending me this money you will be serving them. If I cannot induce you to believe that—believe at least that as I said, you will be saving me from ruin. God is my witness that that is true!"

The manner of the man—so different from the self-possessed, easy, dignified air she remembered in him—impressed her greatly.

"I should like," she said again, "to do good to somebody."

Mr. Frost gathered all his energies to plead his cause. His words were eloquent. But more eloquent to Veronica were his trembling lips, his wrinkled brow, his eager and restless hands.

"If I can do this thing I will," she said at length.

He sprang up and took her hand. "I cannot thank you in words," he said. "It was a good inspiration that made me think of applying to you!"

"But—I shall need my husband's consent."

"Your husband's only?"

"Certainly. Whose else?"

"You have no marriage settlement? No trustees?"

This was the first time that the idea of having her money settled on herself had occurred to her. Her marriage had been hurried and private. There had been no one to watch her interests or advise her. And, lest it should be supposed that Cesare had purposely taken a dishonourable advantage of her confidence or imprudence, it must be explained that marriage settlements are unknown in his country; and that he was too ignorant of English customs to be aware of their existence here.

"No," she answered, after a moment's pause. "I have no settlement; no trustees. I have no one but Cesare."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Frost, looking at her for an instant with his old searching keenness. "Fortunately for me," he added, "your influence over Prince Barletti is unbounded. I remember noting that."

"Do you?"

"Yes. If I have your promise, I am secure about the prince. But he may require more explanations than you have asked for. You have been generous in refraining from questioning me. I feel it. I shall not forget it. But he will say perhaps, 'Why did not this man apply elsewhere?' to his partner, for example? to those connected with him by business ties? I reply that in certain circumstances to be seen to need a thing is fatal. The very urgency of the case excites mistrust and apprehension. And the small sum which divides ruin from security cannot be obtained, because it is so essential to obtain it. But I will see the prince. I will speak with him. I will give him any guarantee in my power. Only let me have your promise. That is sufficient. One word more! I rely on your generosity and honour to keep this application a secret."

"If I can do this thing, I will," said Veronica once more.

Then Mr. Frost took his leave, scarcely daring to believe in his success; and yet feeling as though a mantle of lead, such as Dante gives to certain wretched souls in purgatory, had been lifted from his head and shoulders since entering that house.

Cesare returned late in the afternoon from his ride. Cesare's riding, though better than his driving, was yet not altogether satisfactory to insular eyes. There was a wooden rigidity about his legs, and a general air of being keenly alive to the possibility of his horse having the best of it in case of any difference of opinion arising between them inimical to grace. Nevertheless as he had good horses, and was willing to lend one of them now and then to a friend, he found companions content to join him in equestrian excursions to places in the neighbourhood of London; or even—though of this his friends were more shy—in a canter in the Row. On the present occasion he had been honoured by the society of two ladies, in addition to that of his friend Count Polyopolis, a Greek gentleman of very varied accomplishments, which were apparently not duly appreciated in his own country, but for the exercise of which he found a favourable field in London, after having exhausted Paris and Vienna. They had all been very merry, and Cesare entered in high good humour.

"You were wrong not to come, ma belle princesse," said he, gaily. "It was very pleasant. We alighted at a village inn, and had beer! Figurati! And there was a garden to the inn, where there was a target. We shot at the target with bows and arrows. Nobody could hit the mark. It was immensely amusing!"

Veronica's headache had apparently passed off. She was dressed with care and elegance. Her voice was gentle, and her manner conciliating, as she said to him,

"Come here and sit down by me, Cesare mio! I have a word to say to you."

"Must I not dress for dinner?"

"There is time enough. Come here for a moment."

He obeyed. Seating himself beside her, he pressed her hand to his lips. It was very thin, and burnt with a feverish heat.

"Cara!" he said, touched with a vague pity as he looked at the wasted little fingers on which the sparkling rings sat so loosely. "If you would always be kind to me, I would rather stay here with you, than divert myself with those others!"

"Ah, you would get tired of staying here with me, Cesare! and I do not wish you to do so. But I like to hear you say so. Do you really love me, Cesare?"

"Ma si!"

"I had a visitor whilst you were out this afternoon; an unexpected visitor."

"Il Vicario? No? It was not that accursed doctor?"

"Oh, Cesare! Why should you speak so of poor Mr. Plew? What reason on earth have you to dislike him?"

"How can I tell? It is an antipathy, I suppose. With his insipid face, and his eyes like your English sky, neither blue nor grey! He attacks my nerves. Well it was not he!"

Veronica made an effort to suppress an angry reply.

"It was Mr. Frost," she answered, shortly, not trusting her self-control to say more at that instant.

"Mr. Frost! Davvero!—Mr. Frost! Ah il povero Frost! He was très bon enfant at Naples; and what was better, a very good lawyer!"

"He is in trouble."

"Si, eh?" said Cesare, whose interest in this announcement did not appear to be keen.

"And I have promised to help him."

"Oh! that was very kind of you," observed Cesare, with a shade of surprise, that yet was not lively enough to rouse him to any great demonstration of caring about what Veronica was saying.

"Yes; I have promised to lend him some money."

"What?" He was not indifferent now. "You are jesting! Lend Mr. Frost money!"

"I, too, was surprised at his request."

"What was it? How was it? Oh!" exclaimed Cesare, struck by a sudden idea, "perhaps he had forgotten his pocket-book, and wanted a few pounds. Were you able to give them to him?"

"Then you would not have objected to my doing so?"

"In that case, no."

"I am glad of that," said Veronica, ignoring the words in italics, "because I promised to assist him. It is a large sum he wants. But we can afford it, I suppose. I never enter into the details of our fortune, but I make no doubt that it will not be difficult for us. In serving him, I shall be indirectly serving others in whom I am interested. I do not exactly understand how; but if you were to ask him he might tell you more explicitly. I was greatly struck by the change in Mr. Frost's appearance. He seems to have been harassed nearly to death. But if you had seen the light that came into his face when I said 'Yes'! It gave me quite a new sensation. I promised to lend him two thousand pounds!"

Cesare had sat silent, listening to his wife with growing uneasiness in his face. At these last words he jumped up and uttered a loud ejaculation. But in the next instant he burst into a mocking laugh:

"What a fool I am! You made me believe you were in earnest."

But even as he said the words his angry face belied them.

"I am in earnest, Cesare."

For all reply he laughed again, and began to walk up and down the room, switching his riding-whip right and left with a sharp, vicious motion.

Veronica proceeded to recapitulate Mr. Frost's words as well as she could remember them. She spoke earnestly and eagerly. At length, finding that she made no impression on her husband, she began to lose patience. "It would be somewhat less grossly ill-bred and discourteous," she said, "if you were to favour me with your objections, if you do object, instead of sneering and strutting in that intolerable manner."

"My objections are that the whole idea is contrary to common sense. Tu sei pazza—you are mad, mia cara."

"How contrary to common sense? I do not think it at all contrary to common sense."

"You do not see, for example, that this man must be at the last extremity before he would attempt such a desperate forlorn hope as this? That he must be as good as ruined already? Tu sei pazza!"

"But if we could save him—and others?"

"Pazza, pazza, pazza!"

"Cesare, I gave him my promise."

"You must have been bewitched, or—dreaming when you gave it," he answered with a singular look.

"After all, the money is mine, and I choose to claim the disposal of it," she cried, her long-repressed resentment blazing out on her cheeks and in her eyes.

Cesare wheeled sharp round in his walk, and looked at her.

"Do you know," he said, slowly, "I begin to be afraid that you really are not in possession of your senses."

"I am in full possession of my senses. I despise your sneer. I despise *you*; yes, I despise you! I will not forfeit my word to please your grudging, petty meanness! The money is mine, mine, I tell you. And I *will* have some share in the disposal of it."

Then he let the demon of rage take full possession of him. From between his clenched teeth he hissed out such words as speedily made her quail and shudder and sink down, burying her head among the cushions of the couch. He had learnt much during the past three months, both of her position and his own in the eyes of the world; and he spared her no detail of his knowledge. He knew his privileges; he knew that there was nothing in all the world which she could call her own; and he also knew that his name and title were looked on as more than equivalent for the surrender of herself and all she possessed. He had lately had increasing reason to be displeased with her. His new friends did not love her. They resented her pride, and ridiculed her pretensions. A hundred taunts which, but for the accidental firing of the long train of discontents, and spites, and vexations, might have remained for ever unspoken, leaped from his tongue. His passion grew with speech, as a smouldering fire rushes into flame at the contact of the outer air. He turned and twisted the elastic riding-whip ferociously in his hands as though it were a living thing that he took pleasure in torturing. And at length, approaching nearer and nearer to Veronica as she cowered on the sofa, bending closer and closer over her, and hissing his fierce invectives into her ear, he suddenly drew

himself upright, whirled the twisted whip with a crash into the midst of some porcelain toys that stood on a distant table, and dashed headlong from the room.

### HURRICANES.

MICHAEL SCOTT, in his delightful West Indian novel of Tom Cringle, gives a very graphic picture of the approach of a tropical storm which would almost pass for a description of the commencement of one of those tremendous convulsions of nature which we still call by the old aboriginal name of "hurricane." First, says the writer referred to, comes a black cloud that slowly spreads like a pall over the entire face of nature. One by one the cattle hurry to sheltered places; the huge carrion crows alone brave the open sky; the jewelled humming-birds disappear; the parrots, pigeons, and cranes retire into the deepest coverts; the wild ducks, migrating to some calm region outside the storm, shoot past in long lines with outstretched necks and clanging wings; the negroes hurry silently from the cane patches with their hoes over their shoulders. There is a lull of expectancy and dread, then the storm bursts in all the blindness of its fury.

One of the most tremendous hurricanes that has ever devastated the West Indies, since 1783, was that of August, 1831. On the night before, at Barbadoes, the sea and air seemed restless and troubled, there were many signs of unsettled weather and an impending gale; but still nothing unusual was anticipated. The wind kept gusty and fitful, and about ten P.M. there was a shower of rain, which was succeeded by a treacherous calm. After this a dense mass of black cloud gathered over the horizon, and hung there in deep gloom. About midnight a severe squall burst forth from this darkness, and fierce and sweeping rain followed, the wind blowing hard from the north-east, and every moment increasing in violence. Louder and louder it grew, till by three o'clock it had increased to a hurricane that raged over the whole island till five o'clock, the lightning every few minutes cleaving the darkness with keen blades of blue flame. Wherever the hurricane spread the houses were levelled to the earth, or the roofs blown off. The largest trees were torn up from their roots, or were snapped in two like reeds. Many persons were buried under the ruins of the houses and huts, and the

survivors cast forth to the storm and rain, at the same time being exposed to instant death from the ceaseless and dangerous drift of scattered boughs and timbers. The wind blew alternately from every point of the compass. After veering to east it went back to north-west, shifted fiercely to east, veered to south-east, and about six o'clock in the morning broke from the south-west with tenfold fury, accompanied by a perfect deluge of rain. This continued for two hours, and during all this time the houseless suffered both bodily and mental torture. In many cases delicate women, risen from a sick bed, and half naked, had to remain in the open fields, separated from their husbands and children. Many infants, too, lost by their mothers, were left exposed to the storm. When day broke through the dreadful gloom, the wrecked country was a heartrending sight. As the howling of the wind and the incessant crash of ruins ceased, there arose the shrieks of the affrighted and the groans of the wounded and dying. The island was like one huge battle-field, and the end of the world seemed come. Then commenced the sorrowful and eager search for the missing, and the extracting of crushed bodies from the ruins. The fields a few hours before so luxuriant, were now deserts. The canes and the corn had both been destroyed. The houses still standing were generally so shaken as to be dangerous. Everywhere was desolation, mourning, and woe. Those churches that were left were converted into hospital depôts for the wounded; the dead were piled in heaps till graves could be dug. There was fear of a famine, and indeed there would have been one but for the generous exertions of some of the merchants, who refused to raise the price of provisions, and distributed large quantities of flour, &c., among the sufferers. A pestilence, too, was dreaded from the shoals of fish cast on shore, and from the negro bodies that began to putrefy before they could be removed from under the ruins. The neighbouring colonies generously sent immediate supplies of provisions and money, and the Governor admitted all such supplies free of duty. Very few vessels rode out the storm, and the southern beach was lined with wrecks, only four or five of which were got off. The streets were strewn with masts, spars, hen-coops, binnacles, and boats blown from the wrecks. The wind crowned all this destruction by actually blowing over one of the "Keys," or tall isolated rocks which had stood near

the entrance of the harbour. About six thousand persons altogether perished at Barbadoes in this storm.

At Forster's Hall Estate, near Job's River, the phenomena were, by many, attributed to an earthquake. Several of the buildings sank into the earth, and a house in which a flock of sheep and some cattle were lodged was swallowed up, and entirely disappeared. A wood adjoining moved down to where the house stood, and a field of young canes took possession of a spot previously occupied by a field of potatoes. At St. Thomas, too, the same convulsions occurred, and the house of a Dr. Brown was partially buried.

Lieutenant-Colonel Reid, amid all the roar and desolation, found a few calm moments to make some scientific observations on the course of the hurricane. He decided that the progressive rate of these terrific storms is not greater than that of the ordinary atmospheric currents, and that hurricanes appear to owe their destructive power chiefly to their rotatory velocity. The distance between Barbadoes and St. Vincent is nearly eighty miles. This storm began at Barbadoes a little before midnight; but it did not reach St. Vincent until seven o'clock next morning; its rate of progress, therefore, was only about ten miles an hour. A gentleman of the name of Simons, who had resided for forty years in St. Vincent, had ridden out at daybreak, and was about a mile from his house when he observed a cloud to the north of him, so threatening in appearance that he had never seen any so alarming during his long residence in the tropics; he described it as appearing of an olive green colour. In expectation of terrific weather he hastened home to nail up his doors and windows; and to this precaution attributed the safety of his house, which was situated on the Upper Adelphi Estate.

A very careful observer at Bridgetown described the hurricane as having been preceded by a morning of cloudless weather and a gentle breeze. This in a few hours gave way to high winds from the east, which soon subsided. With occasional puffs only from the east the heat increased about two P.M. to eighty-eight degrees, and was unusually oppressive and sultry. At four the thermometer sank two degrees; at five dense clouds gathered from the north; then came a shower of rain followed by an ominous stillness, with a dismal blackness gathering all round, a dim circle of imperfect light appearing towards the zenith: at six and seven the sky was

cleared, and the air was calm; at seven the wind again blew from the north; at half-past nine it freshened, and showers of rain fell; at half-past ten distant lightning was seen. Then till midnight came squalls of wind and rain with intermediate calms, the thermometer varying with great rapidity. After midnight the gale increased from the north-east, and the lightning was more vivid and frequent. At one A.M. the wind changed to the south-west, and blew harder than ever. When the hurricane first began, so capricious was the storm, that some houses were levelled to the ground, when the residents of others not a mile off were scarcely sensible that the weather was unusually boisterous. Just before the full madness of the storm broke forth, the sky was incessantly in a blaze with quivering sheets of lightning, but these were surpassed by the bolts of electric fire that kept exploding in all directions. The hurricane was at its height about two, but at three the occasional outbursts were tremendous. When the lightning ceased for a moment the pitchy darkness that wrapped the town seemed inexpressibly awful to the frightened watchers. Many meteors, and one in particular, were noted by our observer. It was of a cylindrical form, like a lamp shade, and globular at the bottom. It was of a deep red hue like red-hot metal, and fell perpendicularly, as if by its own gravity, and not as if shot or propelled from any other aerolite. On approaching the earth with increased velocity it assumed a dazzling whiteness and an elongated form, and on striking the earth in Beckwith-square splashed to pieces as if it had been molten metal or boiling quicksilver. A few minutes after this phenomenon the wind suddenly lulled to a low distant roar, and the lightning, which had scarcely ceased to flash and dart, played fiercely between the clouds and the earth, casting down blazes of flame which seemed answered and returned by gushes of fire from the earth's surface. The moment after the hurricane burst forth again from the west with tenfold violence. No thunder was distinctly heard; but there was one horrible roar of wind and waves, mixed with the ceaseless clattering of tiles, the snapping of glass, the falling of roofs and walls, the shouts of men, the groans and screams of the wounded and dying, and the shrieks of the women and children.

At dawn, the observer we quote made his way to the wharf though the rain was painful to the face, and was so dense as to veil every object beyond the head

of the pier. Gigantic waves were there rolling in as if threatening the town with destruction. The beach was entirely covered with wrecks, and an undulating mass of lumber, shingle, staves, barrels, trusses of hay, and every kind of buoyant merchandise. Only two vessels were afloat within the pier, all the rest were capsized or on their beam-ends in shallow water. From the cathedral tower, a picture of universal ruin presented itself at every point of the compass. The whole face of the country was laid waste, no sign of vegetation was apparent, except here and there small patches of a sickly green. The surface of the ground seemed as if scorched by fire. The few remaining trees, half stripped of their boughs, looked forlorn and wintry. The merchants' houses around Bridgetown were no longer hidden by groves, but stood out, desolate and exposed ruins. The trees, by the direction of their fall, showed that they had been for the most part blown down by the blasts from the north-west.

At the Barbadoes Government House the hurricane had not altogether been unguarded against. The calm, but fiery, evening sky of the 9th had been followed by a storm that had driven twenty-five large ships in the bay to sea, and the doors and windows of Government House had then been barricaded, as a precaution against the now inevitable storm. This was at six P.M., but by ten the wind had forced a passage through the house from the north-west. The tempest increasing every minute, the family took to the centre of the building, imagining, from the building being circular, and the walls a good three feet thick, they would withstand the wind's utmost rage. However, by half-past eleven, half the roof being torn off, they retreated to the cellar, from whence they were soon driven by the water, which, finding a vent there, rose to the height of four feet. There was only one refuge—the fields, though trees were falling in all directions. The family then huddled under the ruins of the foundation of the flag-staff, which, however, soon after gave way, and dispersed the fugitives. The Governor and the few that remained with him were thrown down by the wind, but eventually gained the shelter of a cannon, and crowded under the carriage, dreading every moment lest it should be dismounted and crush them by its fall, or lest the powder magazine close by should blow up. The armoury, not far off, was soon levelled to the ground, and the arms scattered far and near. The fortifications

were much injured, and it was particularly mentioned, to show the force of the wind, that a twelve-pounder gun on a wheeled carriage was driven by degrees all the way from the south to the north battery, a distance of one hundred and forty yards.

This storm only touched a part of St. Lucia; after a few hours the wind there went entirely down, and the evening was beautiful and calm. At St. Vincent's every building was blown over and the town destroyed. At Granada nineteen sail of loaded Dutch ships were stranded and beaten to pieces. Four ships foundered off Martinique. In the town of St. Pierre more than a thousand persons perished. At Fort Royal, the cathedral, seven churches, and fourteen hundred houses were blown down, and the hospital of Notre Dame, in which were sixteen hundred sick and wounded, fell and crushed the greater part of the inmates. Altogether, about nine thousand persons perished in Martinique alone. Tortola, too, suffered severely. The whole town of Rood Harbour was demolished, two-thirds of the sugar houses, and all the negro huts were destroyed, and one hundred persons perished. The president of the island lost his wife, and was himself severely injured; but he instantly called a council to open the ports for six months to all lumber and provisions sent from the United States. The furniture, plate, cattle, &c., engulfed or destroyed were valued at four hundred thousand pounds. The planters looked with horror on lands where no crops could be expected for years, even if the sugar works had not been destroyed. At St. Eustatia seven ships were driven on shore, and all the crews were drowned. Nearly all the houses of the town were washed into the sea, and between four and five thousand persons lost their lives. At St. Martin's everything was blown down but the boiling houses, and about one hundred and forty-seven persons perished in the ruins of the fallen buildings.

This hurricane sweeping all round the Leeward Islands, wrecked or shattered every ship it met; at Antigua it sank a sloop of war, and dashed several merchantmen and about thirty small vessels on shore. At St. Bartholomew forty vessels went on shore at the same time.

The details of a small hurricane at Rarotonga, one of the South Sea Islands, in December, 1831, are curious, as exemplifying some minor peculiarities of these tremendous visitations. The Reverend Mr. Williams, a missionary, describes this storm as beginning with a very heavy sea, which

threatened the destruction of his vessel in the harbour of Avarna. He, therefore, employed natives to build a rough breakwater of stones round the vessel, and to fasten the chain cable to the main post of a large school-room, which stood on a bank ten feet high, forty or fifty yards from the sea, to which room all the timber and ship's stores were removed for safety. The next day the storm raged with great violence, and the rain poured down without ceasing. Trees began to split and houses to fall. The luxuriant groves and neat white cottages were soon mere ruins, and the screaming women were everywhere running wildly with their children, seeking places of shelter or dragging their property from the wreck. The chapel fell in, and the natives were driven to the mountains. The lightning streamed from the black clouds, and the thunder seemed to shake the island to its very centre. The water for a mile from the shore was several feet deep. This was the crisis of the hurricane. The wind shifting suddenly a few points to the west, the sea almost instantly receded. To the astonishment of the missionary his vessel was found carried over a swamp and lodged in a grove of chesnut trees, which had stopped her being hurled into a bog several hundred yards beyond.

In our brief record of tropical hurricanes, the hurricane at sea must not be forgotten. The log of the Calypso (Mr. Wilkinson, master) furnishes us with some interesting particulars of a storm of this kind in August, 1837. The vessel was, by observation at the time, in latitude twenty-six degrees forty-seven minutes north, and longitude seventy-five degrees five minutes west. The wind was about east-north-east. The wind freshened till only double-reefed topsails, reefed foresail, and mizen could be carried. Next day the wind increased, the ship laboured much, and the pumps had to be constantly kept going. The day after, the sea stove in the fore scuttle, and, it being impossible to stop the leak, the chief mate got a small axe, which he had carefully sharpened a few days previous, and began to cut away the mizen-mast. All at once the vessel heeled over so that fourteen men and the brave captain only saved themselves with difficulty. The ship was sinking fast. Some of the survivors instantly began cutting the weather lanyards of the rigging, while others called to God for mercy, or remained stupefied with despair. The moment, however, the lanyards were cut, the three masts went by the board, and the vessel righted, though but slowly. The boats

were gone, the main hatches were stove in, the planks of the deck were everywhere starting, the hold was full of rum-puncheons, which were dashing about loose, the shattered gunwales were only a few feet from the level of the sea, which broke over the vessel as if she were a mere log. When the hurricane lulled, the pumps were mended, and set constantly at work, and the wreck of the masts cut away. When the water in the hold sank to nine feet, a spare spar was rigged for a jury-mast, and a sail set on it. On the second of September the crew, after undergoing fearful hardships, got the ship into Wilmington safely. There was never, perhaps, an instance of a vessel so completely disabled by a hurricane, so entirely stripped of masts, sails, and ropes, reaching a distant port in safety. Only the promptitude and energy of the captain, and the untiring exertions of the crew could have saved a ship all but water-logged.

The European hurricane, in comparison with such storms as these, is but as a child compared to a giant. The worst it can do on land is to hurl down chimney-pots, strike down trees, and now and then blow down a steeple. Perhaps one of the most sudden and violent European storms known was that of July, 1786, when a raging wind, driving before it clouds of hail, or rather blocks of ice of great size, hard as diamonds, and so elastic that they rebounded from the ground, swept over the greater part of France. Between St. Germain and Marly, the lumps of ice, weighing from eight to ten ounces, destroyed every growing crop, and nearly all the fruit trees. All hopes of a harvest were in a few minutes entirely ruined. These ice missiles cut to pieces a forest of chesnut trees near Marly, so that it seemed to have been fired at with cannon. The lucerne, the pulse, the corn, and the vines were all beaten to pieces or driven into the ground. Houses and cottages were unroofed, windows everywhere destroyed, cows, sheep, and lambs killed, and many of the poor, on their way to mass, wounded or maimed. The steeple of a church at Gallardon fell, crashing in the roof of the choir at the very moment of the elevation of the host. The frightened people fell backward in terror, crying out with one voice, "The Lord have mercy upon us, miserable sinners!" No one was, however, injured. A church at Tours was blown down by the storm. Luckily there was no one in it but the curé, who, though almost frightened to death, saved himself under the arch of a fountain in the choir. Three windmills in another district were

blown down, and three persons who had taken shelter in them killed on the spot. At Pontoise, out of sixty-six parishes, forty lost every crop, and the rest half, two-thirds, or three-quarters. This storm, though not very destructive to human life, had more of the suddenness and irresistible violence of a tropical hurricane about it than any other on record.

One or two scientific facts about hurricanes should not be overlooked. It is a singular fact that, though they rage with the greatest fury in the torrid zone, they never touch nor cross the equator. In the polar regions they are entirely unknown. A hurricane first observed at the Windward Islands in October, 1858, spread almost or quite to the shores of Europe. Hurricanes are always preceded by an aerial wave that gives notice through the barometer of the coming danger. English and American savans, tracking these storms for three thousand miles, have proved them to be progressive and rotatory. Their progress varies from four to forty-four miles an hour; but their rotatory movement is greater near the centre than in the outer whirls. The hurricanes of the South Indian oceans are estimated to range from one hundred and eighty to six hundred miles in diameter. The most established theory of the origin of these storms is that certain winds set in motion by some mysterious agency towards the poles experience an opposition from inert masses of air they meet in their course, as well as from opposing trade winds, and so are spun by the conflict into whirls. It is to be hoped that in time the telegraph, by its swift warnings, will disarm hurricanes, and render them almost entirely powerless.

#### ROTTEN HUSTINGS.

In the autumn of last year the columns of the newspapers were filled, day after day, with reports of the evidence taken before certain Commissioners appointed to inquire into the existence of corrupt practices in certain boroughs. Two, at least, of the edifying histories that were at that time disclosed are well worth consideration, now that the facts are presented clearly and concisely. The reports of the Beverley and Bridgwater Commissioners disclose so remarkable a state of things, and those towns hold so infamously distinguished a place in the annals of bribery, that it would be a pity to allow the deeds done in them to remain unchronicled. Let

us see what the Commissioners have to tell us about the first of these very rotten boroughs.

Beverley, the capital of the East Riding of Yorkshire, has had considerable experience in the profitable business of electing members of parliament. Its electoral privileges date from as remote a period as the twenty-third year of the reign of Edward the First, and ever since the fifteenth year of Queen Elizabeth this favoured spot has returned two members. At the date of the last election, which took place in 1868, and was the immediate cause of the visit of the Commissioners, the population numbered some twelve thousand, and the registered electors two thousand one hundred and one. Before the passing of the last Reform Bill, in 1867, the constituency was only some eleven hundred strong. Of this body about eight hundred were notoriously open to bribery and corrupt influences. Of this eight hundred, some three hundred were free lances, without political principles or prejudices one way or the other; half the remaining five hundred were determined to be paid, whenever money was going (and money always was going at Beverley elections), by the candidate whose political views they favoured, if possible; if not, then by his opponent. If the money came from a candidate of their own colour it was not considered a bribe; if it came from the other side it *was* called a bribe, but that circumstance made very little difference.

Two-thirds of the gentlemen of Beverley who recorded their votes in the elections of 1857, 1859, 1860, and 1865, received (so think the Commissioners) bribes in some shape or other. In 1854, owing to accidental causes, there was actually a pure election in Beverley: a circumstance, no doubt, productive of great discontent among the inhabitants. The next election, which took place in March, 1857, was, however, conducted on strictly corrupt principles, and was followed by the unseating of one of the successful candidates, on the ground of want of qualification; thus securing for the borough a fresh election without the annoyance of inconvenient questions as to bribery, on the part of a Committee of the House of Commons. This second 1857 election took place in August, and from it may be said to date the history of the palmy days of Beverley bribing. And it was on this occasion that the master spirit who has ever since ruled over political Beverley came to the front. The candidates were Major Edwards, who polled five hundred

and seventy-nine votes, and Mr. Wells, who only scored four hundred and one. The borough was absolutely deluged with corrupt money. Mr. Wells, who had been defeated in the first election in 1857, had to pay nine hundred and seventy-three pounds for the privilege of being twice defeated and of once petitioning; but it appears that this gentleman was not privy to any illegal proceedings of his agents. Major Edwards, whose agent returned his expenses to the auditor as amounting to four hundred and twenty-two pounds three shillings and a penny, expended, in point of fact, the comfortable little amount of two thousand seven hundred and eighty-five pounds and some odd shillings for the August election alone, that being his first appearance in the character of Jupiter to the Beverley Danaë. For a beginner there was singularly little embarrassment or hesitation in Major Edwards's way of setting to work. Mr. Cronhelm, the cashier and manager of the candidate's business in Halifax, arrived one day quite openly in Beverley. Before his departure from home, some kind soul had furnished this gentleman with two thousand pounds, and of this he brought five hundred pounds with him to Beverley. Sharp and decisive, a man of business, and a hater of shilly-shally, Mr. Cronhelm went straight to the point. He had, it appears, the advantage of an acquaintance with one Mr. Champney, a leading Beverley solicitor, and before commencing operations sought that astute person's advice. "Now, I must put a very plain question to you," says Mr. Cronhelm to his friend. "I am a stranger in Beverley, and am ignorant of the inhabitants and of their mode of proceeding, in the elections and everything. Now will you tell me candidly, as a friend, and as a friend of Sir Henry Edwards, whether you think it possible for Major Edwards to carry this election without bribery?" The reply was not to be mistaken, although Mr. Champney might as well have said "no" at once. "I am afraid not, I think not," was the form in which he preferred to express his opinion of the probability of honest voting in Beverley. It was enough, however, for Mr. Cronhelm. "Well," he said, "if that is the case, I am prepared with money power to any extent; will you put me in communication with the gentleman who really has the management of the bribery?" It is scarcely necessary to add that the individual in question, who happened to be a cowkeeper, was promptly sent for, and that Major Edwards's two thousand pounds

speedily irrigated the thirsty constituency. The exact details of the expenditure could not be arrived at, even by the insinuating questions of the Commissioners. Actuated by a wise discretion, and not without suggestions from party managers in London, the head bribers in Beverley carefully destroyed all books, memoranda, or other documents of a compromising nature, as soon as it became evident that the Royal Commission would issue. The two thousand seven hundred and odd pounds which we have mentioned as having been Major Edwards's expenditure will no doubt appear a very large sum; but even that amount is but an incomplete total of the moneys really expended, inasmuch as from the autumn of '57 up to the general election of 1859 remittances of money were forwarded regularly from Halifax to the Major's local election agent, one Wreghitt, a linendraper, in Beverley.

Mr. Wreghitt's accounts of the expenditure of these moneys would have been interesting, but in face of the expected Commission, and acting under the same advice, this political draper followed the example of his brother bribers. In March of last year he destroyed all the books and papers relating to his bribery transactions, which extended over a period of twelve years, from the election in 1857 to 1869, and it was only by searching and persevering inquiry that the Commissioners were enabled to trace out the course of action by which Mr. Wreghitt succeeded in buying the constituency of Beverley literally by wholesale.

There are, in and about Beverley, some twelve hundred acres of land, valued at over four thousand pounds a year, and known as the Beverley pastures. The management of these lands is, by act of parliament, vested in a body of twelve pasture-masters, who must be freemen of the borough, and the electoral body by whom they are chosen consists of freemen, resident within the ancient limits of the borongh, and placed on what is called the pasture-freemen's roll. In addition to the patronage exercised by the pasture-masters, they have the disposal, under the will of a Mr. Robert Walker, of a fund producing an annual income of about ninety pounds. This money was left to be distributed among such poor freemen, their widows and children, "as may require the same by reason of any losses they may have sustained by death of their horses, sheep, or pigs, or in order to enable them to purchase stock, or carts, or other necessary things of the like nature, or otherwise to help them

on in the world." Furthermore, the testator expressly enjoins the trustees to make these payments in substantial sums, sufficient to secure the object he had in view, and not to fritter the fund away in small sums. The chances of successful bribery afforded by the existence of such a body as these pasture-masters, were too obvious to escape the watchful eye of the astute draper. He proceeded at once to secure the pasture-masters, and so judiciously did he manipulate the funds with which he was supplied, that in 1860 all the pasture-masters were Conservatives. These persons, who had secured their elections by the aid of Conservative bribery, and who were themselves, to a certain extent, bribed by the very fact of their elections, naturally enough set about keeping the ball a-rolling, and, with the trust funds at their disposal, took to bribing in the Conservative interest with all their might. It was a small matter to them that, on their election, they were compelled to make a declaration to the effect that they would faithfully, impartially, and honestly discharge the pasture-masters' duties without favour or affection. The clearly-expressed wishes of the deceased donor of "Walker's Gift" mattered nothing to them. The gift was, there can be no manner of doubt, systematically distributed with a view to political interests, and it very soon became noticeable that staunch Conservative voters invariably succeeded in obtaining the largesse, to the exclusion of partisans of the other colour. And it was not particularly necessary to possess any qualification, except that of steady party voting. Thus, in three cases cited by the Commissioners, it is clear that the necessities of the applicants were not taken largely into account. One Duncum, owner in fee of twelve cottages, of the annual value of thirty pounds, applied for, and received, the gift; another, named Gawan, the owner of two houses, living in a house the rent of which was eighteen pounds a year, and earning upwards of two pounds a week, received six pounds from the "gift." This person had lost nothing, and was clearly ineligible as a recipient of the bounty of the late Mr. Walker; but then he had voted straight at the previous election. Another person, named Lancaster, adopted a more circuitous mode of obtaining some of the good things that were going about. This individual, a mechanic employed in the Beverley Iron and Waggon Company's works, and earning twenty-two shillings a week, applied for, and re-

ceived, the charity under the pretence of having lost a horse. The actual fact turned out to be that, having Walker's gift in view, he had bought a horse on Saturday, nominally for three pounds. The animal died, (as was probably expected) on Sunday, and on Monday the bereaved proprietor sold the carcass for fifteen shillings. Without loss of time, he applied to the pasture-masters for the bounty, and received three pounds. When the gift was awarded, the business was completed by the original owner of the horse returning thirty shillings of the purchase money to Mr. Lancaster, who thus made a profit of two pounds five shillings on the transaction. It was a curious circumstance that when the Commissioners endeavoured to get explanations of these and similar cases from the clerk to the pasture-masters, that gentleman's memory entirely failed him as to all points of importance.

That bribing money should have been forthcoming at the elections of town councillors was a matter of course, and Mr. Wreggitt, who was chairman of the Working Men's Conservative Association, made, with the assistance of that body, all necessary arrangements. The result, of course, was that in a short time the town council, as well as the pasture-masters' board, was in the hands of the Conservative party. But this was not all. Mindful of the importance of beginning at the beginning, and of training up a voter in the way in which you wish him ultimately to walk, Mr. Wreggitt directed his attention to the young men entitled to their freedom, and willing to accept the funds required for the payment of the necessary fees, amounting to two pounds ten shillings. It will be seen that to be a freeman of Beverley was, to a person of easy conscience, to occupy a post of considerable profit. Besides the grand occasional bribery at parliamentary elections, all sorts of smaller bribes were constantly going about the town at elections of town councillors and of pasture-masters, and then there was always a chance of getting something from "Walker's Gift"—a ludicrously appropriate name. So it is not by any means surprising that plenty of young men were to be found willing to be introduced to this profitable guild, and to be bribed in limine by the payment of fees. The only question that appears to have been asked was, whether the candidate would support the major. If not, there was nothing for him, it would only be wasting the major's money. If the reports of the candidate were satisfactory,

the cash was immediately forthcoming. In one such case, a witness stated, "A young man was desirous of taking up his freedom. I spoke to Mr. Wreghtitt about him, and fetched his uncle, and his uncle pledged his word that he (the apprentice) would support them if they would take up his freedom. *The uncle was a man of property,* and promised me ten shillings if I would get the two pounds ten from Wreghtitt. I was present when the money was given to the uncle." From this it will be seen that the infection of corruption with which the borough reeked was not confined to mechanics with two-and-twenty shillings a week. Men of property, well-to-do tradesmen, Tom, Dick, and Harry, middle-class and lower class, almost all Beverley in fact, seethed in the great pot of bribery which head-cook Wreghtitt kept continually simmering, to overflow in a genial stream of sovereigns at such times as Beverley should be called upon to send a member, or two, as the case might be, to represent her in the pure atmosphere of the House of Commons. With the modesty of true genius the mainspring and head of this gigantic system of corruption disclaims the whole credit of having invented it. It was but the continuation of a thing long known before in Beverley. But he is obliged to add that before he took matters in hand Conservatism in Beverley was nearly extinct; "therefore, as far as it exists here now, I must have a certain amount of the credit or blame, as it may be."

The money required for these operations was supplied, the Commissioners say, by Major Edwards alone, up to the general election of 1859. From that year to 1868 his colleagues in the representation of Beverley shared the expenses (and the results of the expenditure) with him, and, indeed, the gentlemen in question fully admitted the fact.

So far we have dealt with bribery on the Conservative side. It is not for a moment to be supposed that the occupants of the Liberal glasshouse can afford to throw any stones. It does not appear that their general tactics savoured so much of systematic corruption as those of their opponents, but then it must be borne in mind that agents gifted with the Napoleonic qualities of the major's energetic draper are unfortunately rare. But when a parliamentary election was actually in progress, bribery went on as merrily among the Liberals as among the Conservatives. In 1859 there was a contest, and an utter stranger to the town, entirely undistin-

guished in public life, was put up against the Conservatives. This gentleman spent fifteen hundred pounds in bribery, and so well were his arguments appreciated that at the close of the election he was found to be at the head of the poll, the redoubtable major having to be content with the position of junior member, and the second Conservative being nowhere. Somebody, however, had the impudence to challenge the return of the Liberal, and a committee of the House of Commons not only unseated him, but ordered sundry prosecutions for bribery. The major kept his seat (he had been petitioned against also), as the committee found that, although corrupt practices had prevailed on his side, they had been committed without his sanction, or that of his agents. This election took place in April, and it is a curious circumstance that, in addition to the amount of expenses submitted to the election auditor, another bill of upwards of two hundred pounds was sent in to the Conservative candidates in September. In 1860 a new writ was issued, and another "merry little mill," as sporting newspapers say, took place for the vacant seat. The defeated Conservative candidate at the preceding election was one of the parties engaged in this contest, and was this time successful by a majority of a hundred and twenty-one, notwithstanding that the Liberals spent thirteen hundred and seventy pounds. This money was distributed by a stranger to Beverley, it being dangerous to entrust anybody known in Beverley with the management of the bribery business, as the prosecutions for bribery ordered by the House of Commons were still pending. This stranger was introduced to the borough by Mr. Walters, the gentleman who had headed the poll at the previous election, and had afterwards been unseated, and was known as "the man with the hairy cap." This hirsute individual passed his time on the polling day in a room at the Pack Horse Inn, where he occupied himself until a late hour in paying voters two pounds a head, and bribed, the Commissioners think, about four-fifths of the four hundred and seventy-three electors who voted the Liberal "ticket." But the Conservatives carried too many guns. Not only had they the advantage of all the general bribery that had been going on in the town since August, 1857, but to make assurance doubly sure they brought a barrister down from London with a bag of sovereigns in his pocket. This legal luminary handed the

money over to a subordinate, and, at the Cross Keys, the amount, variously stated at two hundred and three hundred pounds, was given in sums of forty and fifty pounds to a select staff of bribers who were then let loose on the town. Votes were not expensive, for one of these rank and file bribers says, "I commenced at one pound, and it extended to two pounds till about dinner time, when the tariff dropped down to a pound again." The defeated candidate announced from the hustings that it was not his intention to petition—a statement which, as he remarks, "appeared to be the most gratifying thing I had ever said during the whole election, for they cheered that immensely." But somebody petitioned, unsuccessfully, it being the opinion of the committee that the victorious candidate and his agents had not been parties to the acts of bribery which were proved. At this election the bill passed by the auditor was three hundred and thirty pounds odd—a supplementary amount for four hundred and one pounds making its appearance some time afterwards. This document contained some suggestive items, such as "Ramshaw's band, sixty pounds;" "Ringers, ten guineas;" "Mr. Hind for refreshments, nine pounds eighteen shillings," and was duly paid.

From 1860 to 1865 Beverley rejoiced in no parliamentary election, but the little game of bribery was kept up with great spirit during that interval. In 1861 there was no contest at the pasture-masters' election, nevertheless each of the members for the borough had to pay thirty pounds on that head. The total expense of that year to each member was one hundred and eighty-four pounds, not including Mr. Wreggitt's salary. This was an expensive year, as the municipal contest was severe, and one hundred pounds had to be spent in bribery. The money must have been well laid out, for Conservatives were elected to all the vacancies. In the following year another hundred pounds were required for the council election, and sixty for the pasture-masters. In 1863 there was a split among the pasture-masters, and the election of Mr. Wreggitt's men could not be secured for less than sixty-five pounds from each member. On the other hand, in 1864, the remittances fell to one hundred and forty pounds each, including the fixed salary. Early in 1865 the junior candidate declined to have anything more to do with Beverley, and another colleague for the major had to be found. This was not difficult, and the battle was begun

under the most favourable circumstances. Wreggitt was, to all intents and purposes, master of Beverley. "Magistrates, aldermen, town councillors, and pasture-masters, bankers, and tradesmen were working with him, and for the same ends. He had been unceasingly labouring for eight years to extend and widen the sources of corruption throughout the borough, and prevent freedom of choice in all the local elections." In these words, and in others yet stronger, the Commissioners describe the Conservative position, and probably no one knowing the facts would have ventured, even with bribery to back him, to attack the citadel. The Liberals, however, found a candidate who had been induced to believe that an expenditure of five hundred pounds beyond the limit of the legitimate expenses would secure the seat. A considerably larger sum was, as a matter of fact, required in the way of bribes, and even then the Conservatives were both elected by considerable majorities, the invincible major at the head of the poll. But the Liberal candidate, who polled four hundred and ninety-five votes, and who expended eight hundred and forty-six pounds in bribing four hundred and seventeen electors, was badly used even by his own bribees, inasmuch as forty-two of them voted for his opponents, while ten philosophically absented themselves from the polling-booths altogether. At this election the price of votes was one or two pounds, according to circumstances. A petition was threatened, but nothing came of it. Of course, when there was no further danger of a petition, supplemental accounts began to come in freely. A sum of one thousand and seventy pounds was illegally spent, as the Commissioners discovered with the greatest difficulty, on behalf of the Conservatives. Eleven hundred voters, or thereabouts, were polled at this election, and it is stated that about eight hundred of these were bribed. The petition did not go on, because "at that time there was very great danger of disfranchisement." Beverley's time was, indeed, nearly come!

From 1865 to 1868, local bribing was brisk in Beverley. On one occasion, Wreggitt's nominees for the town council, who had been elected by large majorities, were ousted from their seats by the Court of Queen's Bench, owing to an informality in their election. The little bill for the law proceedings (nearly four hundred pounds) was handed over to the sitting members by Mr. Wreggitt, and paid in due course. In 1868, Beverley was the scene of another

election ; the last, it is to be hoped, which that hotbed of corruption will ever see. Two Liberal candidates and two Conservatives solicited the sweet voices of the constituency. The Liberals are pronounced by the Commissioners free from all taint of bribery whatever. The Conservative bribery was on the usual scale, and was done at the election of town councillors, which took place only a month before the parliamentary election. Matters were this time managed with a surprising absence of concealment. The traffic was carried on openly in the streets and market-place. Voters were brought to shops, opened for the purpose, to be paid. One agent gives evidence that he knew at one o'clock that his party had won, and remarked the fact to another briber. "Pay on" was, however, the order. It was necessary that plenty of money should go about. Nearly one thousand persons were bribed on this occasion. A month after came the parliamentary election, and both Conservative candidates were returned by large majorities. The Commissioners connect this result with the bribery at the municipal election in the following words :

"The municipal contest, in which bribery had been so undisguisedly and extensively practised, was treated as a prelude to the parliamentary election, if not as a part of it; and the bribes were given, and in many cases received, as an earnest of what was to come. But we experienced great difficulty in discriminating, in individual instances, between those who took bribes for the municipal election only and those who, to use a local phrase, took them for the 'double event.' The large extension of the franchise under 'The Representation of the People Act, 1867,' made the municipal roll nearly identical with the parliamentary register, within the limits of the municipal boundary; so that it was reduced almost to a certainty that the man who voted under the influence of a bribe in the council choosing, would also have a vote in the election of members of parliament."

Finally, the Commissioners conclude their admirably lucid report by finding that corrupt practices prevailed in Beverley at the election in March, 1857, and that similar practices extensively prevailed at the elections of 1859, 1860, 1865, and 1868. A list of bribers and bribees, some of whom were implicated in more than one election, follows the report, and this black list contains some six hundred names.

This is the recent political history of Beverley, as shamelessly corrupt and dis-

graceful a borough as can be imagined. It may be urged in arrest of judgment that there are other towns almost as bad, but which have as yet escaped detection. Possibly. But we have got Beverley in the toils, and it will be a national disgrace if its inhabitants are ever again allowed to have a voice in making the laws which they have so long and so systematically broken.

#### HOPE DEFERRED AT SEA.

At the time when this page is being put to press (Thursday, March 24th) the fate of a noble ship is the subject of anxious and painful suspense on both sides of the Atlantic. A grand ocean steamer, well built, well engined, well equipped, is missing ; and men are speculating on the probable causes of her non-appearance.

If we search the records of the past, we find numerous instances of missing ships coming to light after a more or less lengthened delay. Omitting examples of actual foundering and actual burning, there are various disasters which still leave to a vessel a chance of returning to port. Sometimes the wind blows from an adverse quarter during so long a period that the ship (especially if unprovided with steam power) has no resource but to remain in some place of shelter until a favourable turn takes place. A calm, on the other hand, has been known to prevail on the Atlantic for weeks together, bringing whole fleets of sailing ships to a complete standstill. A single example will suffice to illustrate this kind of ocean trouble. One day last autumn the war-steamer *Topaze* found herself suddenly becalmed in the Atlantic, and around her were no less than sixty-six sailing ships perfectly helpless. They could neither advance nor recede. One of them, the *Agra*, had been thus situated for at least a fortnight; and if the *Topaze*—which, as a steamer, could laugh at calms—had not supplied her with provisions, the result might have been serious to those on board.

We shall presently adduce reasons why modern steamers are not so likely as the sailing ships of past generations to suffer famine through any unwanted detention at sea ; and why the route between Liverpool and New York is much more likely to afford succour in time of distress than almost any other that can be named. Certainly, in olden time, when ships were few and far between, the narratives presented were often very sad. In the case of the *Trinity*

and the Minion, in the time of Henry the Eighth, the troubles were chiefly on dry land; but they arose mainly from the insufficient victualling of vessels sent out on an exploratory voyage to new regions. There were strange notions in those days about the American coast, and the probability of a short and easy passage round northward to the great Pacific. Men of station often fitted out expeditions, with dreams of untold wealth as a possible reward. One of them, Mr. Hore, a gentleman of London, inducing others to join him, fitted out the ships above named, engaged a crew, and provided a certain inadequate supply of food and other stores. The ships started from Gravesend in April, 1536, worked their way round the southern coast, and then steered boldly across the Atlantic. What knowledge they possessed of the latitudes of any places in the far north regions of the American continent, is not now ascertainable; but after two months' absence from land of any kind, they found themselves on the coast of what is now called Cape Breton. Impelled by the rapid exhaustion of their provisions, they shot penguins, and ospreys, and bears whenever they could, and tried whether the sea would yield them fish; but somehow these resources failed, and the men grubbed up herbs and roots along the coast. Hunger and discontent bred insubordination; and the officers found that, of the boats' crews who landed each day, one after another disappeared. At last the terrible truth became revealed, that some of the men had been shot by others, and appropriated as food. The captain exhorted; but the sailors, desperate with hunger, resolved to cast lots who should die next. Providentially, a French ship hove in sight, and supplied Hore and his companions with sufficient food to enable them to return to England. One of the sailors lived to narrate this story to Hakluyt, fifty years afterwards.

In the case of the Jacques, the troubles arose out of the general unseaworthiness of the ship. She left Brazil for France, in January, 1558, with a cargo of dye woods. Twenty-five officers and crew, and twenty passengers, were on board. Seven days after the start, a leak was discovered, and was patched up in a temporary way with grease, lead, and cloths. After a consultation, five of the passengers resolved to make a boat voyage back to the coast; the carpenter urged the captain to take the ship back also, as being too old and worm-eaten to brave the ocean in her present

state; but this being refused the voyage recommenced. The ship was tossed about, during the remainder of January and the whole of February, with difficulty answering her helm, and entailing much labour in pumping to keep down the leakage. One day, a quarrel occurring between the pilot and the mate, both neglected their duty; the ship went over on her beam-ends during a squall; and although she righted again, some of her planks started, the water rushed in, the passengers ran to the boat in terror, and all was confusion. The pilot, cutlass in hand, prevented any one from lowering the boat—possibly foreseeing that drowning would be the almost inevitable result of such a proceeding. The carpenter kept at work, stopping the leaks as well as he could. So passed March, and so passed April, by which time almost every scrap of food on board was gone, notwithstanding short allowance and great economy. Parrots and monkeys, brought by the passengers as curiosities from Brazil, were killed and eaten; the sweepings of the bread room were made into dirty dough for cakes; and all the skins and furs of animals on board were carefully husbanded. Old leather jackets and shoes, old horn-plates of lanterns, old coverings of trunks, bits of candle, and drops of oil, were converted into food in some form or other. The rats and mice were so hungry that they left their holes to forage about the ship; and the people hunted them with the avidity of cats. One of the passengers gave a sailor four crowns for a single mouse. The surgeon, who had caught two mice, refused a new suit of clothes in exchange for one of them. There was no wine, no water; the only beverage was a little cider, of which a wineglass was given to each person per day. When rain occasionally fell it was collected with much care on sheets and tarpaulins, hollowed down in the middle by a few shot. Two of the crew died early in May. Léry, one of the passengers, who lived to write a narrative of the voyage, said: "When Philip, the chief of the passengers, was thus employed," [trying to gnaw bits of Brazil wood] "he said, with a deep sigh, 'Léry, my friend, four thousand livres are owing to me in France, which I would gladly relinquish for a loaf of bread and a glass of wine!' Peter Richer, our minister, had now almost expired of want; stretched out in his cabin, he prayed as long as he was able; at length his voice ceasing, life departed a short time afterwards." At last the joyous cry, "Land!" was heard; the coast of Brittany was reached; and

the poor Jacques found a safe harbour. Some of the exhausted crew killed themselves with ravenous eating, on finding themselves suddenly furnished with abundant food.

The Dolphin, in more recent times, bound from the Canaries to New York, was a hundred and sixty-five days at sea—an inordinate period, as any one may see by tracing the route on a map. Seventy-five days after the start, the food was nearly all gone; and the remaining ninety were days of misery indeed. A dog and a cat were cooked and eaten; the old shoes were eaten; then the appalling ordeal of casting lots was talked about. The captain, remembering an old pair of breeches of his, lined with leather, succeeded in deterring the crew from their dread purpose, by giving them a small piece of leather each, as a daily allowance, with some grass which had by that time begun to grow on deck. He was rewarded for his forethought and humanity; the Andalusia, Captain Bradshaw, hove in sight, and saved the small crew of the Dolphin from starvation.

The story of the Peggy, again, excited much attention a century ago. This vessel, commanded by Captain David Harrison, after a successful voyage from New York to Fayal, one of the Azores, took in a cargo of wine, brandy, and other commodities, and started back for New York on the 24th of October, 1769. November storms tore the rigging, and loosened the old timbers. As the provisions were getting low, Harrison put all hands on short allowance on the 1st of December. Each man's daily ration was reduced to a quarter of a pound of bread, a pint of wine, and a quart of water. As wine was the principal item in the cargo, drink was obtainable throughout the voyage; but the scarcity of water led to distressing results. Two ships passed within sight, but the weather was too rough to render approach safe. When the food was absolutely gone, the crew took, in frenzied eagerness, to the wine; the captain urged them to more caution, but was unheeded. He himself took special care of two gallons of dirty water, found at the bottom of a cask. Christmas Day came, and with it the sight of a vessel, which, at first, seemed inclined to render help; but it would have been better if she had not been sighted at all, for she sailed on without coming near. Nevertheless, the poor fellows did manage to get something extra for Christmas fare; two small pigeons made a dinner for the whole of them. Having one cat on board, poor puss was killed on Boxing Day, and divided into

nine parts; Captain Harrison taking the head as his share, and giving the remaining eight portions to the eight men. On the following day, the outside of the vessel was scraped for barnacles, but they were too low down for the weakened men to get at them. The ship was in such a helpless state, that the crew could hardly have navigated her, even had they been in average health and strength; but, as matters stood, they were almost too exhausted to labour; and, having little or no solid food, their only resource was wine. They were all half intoxicated, and the mate much more than half, during the rest of the sad voyage. Captain Harrison adhered to his modicum of dirty water, with a few drops of medicinal balsam in it, for days. As all the candles and lamp oil had been taken for food, the long, dark, winter nights added to the misery of all hands. The last bit of ragged sail was blown away by a strong wind; the tobacco was gone; the leather of the pumps, and the horn coat buttons, were boiled or softened and eaten; at last came the day which Harrison had long foreseen and dreaded. The mate and the men asked permission to cast lots. He refused; they determined to do it without him; and a poor negro became the victim. He was eaten; another man died three days afterwards; the captain, living on nothing but his drop of water, lay prostrate in bed with weakness. The remaining six men demanded another casting of lots; it fell upon David Flatt, who happened to be the favourite of the whole ship. The wretched men were agonised; they resolved to wait until eleven o'clock, on the following day, to see whether, by any possibility, help would come to them. They had their reward. At eight o'clock on the eventful morning, a vessel was descried. The men could hardly believe their eyes; one had gone mad, the mate was nearly mad with wine, two were dead, the captain was lying helpless, and the other five had only strength enough to make signals of distress. These were seen. The succouring ship was the Susannah, of London, Captain Thomas Evans, on her return voyage from Virginia to England. Three of the crew of the poor Peggy, worn out with their prolonged sufferings, died on the homeward voyage, leaving only four of the original nine remaining, when the Susannah reached England early in March.

In one remarkable instance, the detention of a fine ship was due to the loss of her rudder—a loss which was braved in a noteworthy manner. Her Majesty's ship Pique

left Quebec on the 17th of September, 1835, having on board Lord Aylmer, ex-governor of Canada, with his family and suite. Captain Rous, her commander, instead of going round south of Newfoundland, took the northern route, through the Straits of Belle Isle, for reasons satisfactory to his judgment. During a dense Newfoundland fog, the ship ran upon some rocks on the night of the 21st. Again and again did Captain Rous try to get her off, again and again did the waves baffle him, until—after sending overboard a hundred tons of water and several heavy guns and shot, to lighten the ship—he deemed it necessary to wait till day-break. They were on a rocky bit of the Labrador coast, and all could have landed. Ought they to land? On the one hand, they had food for four months, with economy; they could make some sort of dwellings with tarpaulins, and a few huts which cod-fishers and curers were accustomed to use in the summer months; and they could use dwarf pine trees for fuel. On the other hand, it was a frightful thing to land three hundred persons, some of them ladies of gentle nurture, on a desolate and rocky spot, with no inhabitants, and no fishing vessels likely to pass that way until six months of a rigorous winter had passed. They decided to dare the ocean rather than the land, and having at last got clear of the rocks, started again on the 24th. But the rudder snapped short off on the third day afterwards, and floated away; while the ship was at the same time letting in two feet of water per day. The carpenters made a new rudder by the evening of the 28th; it would not work; so it was cut adrift, and the ship was steered by sail only. Tossed about, driven hither and thither, failing in getting aid from other ships, and lightened by throwing overboard one gun after another, the poor *Pique* struggled on. On the 1st of October, a little aid was received from the *Suffrein*, of St. Malo, in dragging the *Pique* round to place her prow in the homeward direction. For four days and nights some progress was made, during which time the carpenters were busily engaged upon another rudder; but they were again unlucky: this third rudder snapped and disappeared. The ship was shaky, the chronometers were shaky, and Captain Rous feared, from the calculations of his dead reckoning, that he was dangerously near the rocks off the Scilly Islands. To the great joy of all, land was descried on the 11th, and the *Pique* safely anchored at St. Helen's on the 12th, after voyaging fifteen hundred miles

without a rudder. Not a soul of the three hundred was lost.

The sad story of the *Diamond* shows that, even on the much-frequented route from Liverpool to New York, the sail alone is but an uncertain reliance in case of mishap. This vessel, commanded by Captain Trale, left the great English port on the 7th of November, 1836, with an ample supply of food and water for a voyage across the Atlantic to New York, thence down the American seaboard to Charleston, and finally back to Liverpool. But on Christmas Eve, when well on towards the place of her destination, the *Diamond* encountered a storm which carried away all the three top-masts, and these in falling snapped off the main and fore-yards. So severe was the shock, that the timbers were in many places loosened, the cargo shifted about, the water casks started, the provision casks were stove in, and the vessel shipped much water. The wind was then favourable for a week; but on New Year's Day it turned dead against them, and the *Diamond* was drifting about during the whole of January. So early as the first week in December, Captain Trale had foreseen the probability of a tediously-prolonged voyage, and had warned all on board to be prudent, and careful of the provisions. The occurrence of the disaster on Christmas Eve led to a reduction of the chief cabin rations to a level with those of the steerage passengers. There were a hundred and eighty passengers, and a crew that raised the number of souls to considerably more than two hundred, in a ship under-provisioned; for nearly all the passengers were to land at New York, and the calculation as to food had been based on the supposition that there would be few persons beside the crew on the coasting voyage to Charleston, and the home voyage to Liverpool. The crew were placed on very short allowance, till they reached port. But the steerage passengers were distressingly placed. The *Diamond* was one among many vessels in which, at that time, the emigrants had to rely pretty much on their own resources for food. When these resources were getting low, all scraps of food were eagerly treasured up; potato peelings and cabbage stumps were prizes; flour was sold by the shilling, the crown, and at last by the half sovereign, per pint, to some of the passengers who had money to spare. Matters went at length so far that a pound sterling was offered and refused for a roasted potato! No wonder that, after a

voyage of a hundred days from Liverpool, when the Diamond entered New York in the first week of February, Captain Trale had to report the death of some of his passengers through insufficiency of food.

Now, in all these sad narratives, and others of similar kind, it is observable that they were sailing ships which suffered ; ships, moreover, mostly in old and battered condition. The mishaps of maritime venture might have happened to better vessels, in regard to winds, storms, striking on shoals, and running against rocks ; but the better vessels would have borne more buffeting before planks, and masts, and rudders gave way. A steamer without sails presents much less surface to be torn and rent by storms than a sailing ship spreading a wide area of canvas. It is quite true, as we know in the cases of the President, the Amazon, and other noble ships, that steamers are lost by wrecking or burning ; but it is equally true that, in regard to the detention of "missing" ships, there is much more ground for hope now, than at any former period of nautical and maritime history : because, firstly, there is a larger proportion of the shipping afloat, fitted to battle against storms ; secondly, there is a shorter duration of voyages generally, and greater chance of succour at hand in case of disaster. We know that, quite recently, the fine Cunard steamer, Samaria, broke her shaft on her way from America ; she was "missing" for some days ; but help came, and help would very likely have come had she been out in mid-ocean instead of nearing the Irish coast. In February and March of the present year, whole fleets of corn-laden ships were "missing" at Liverpool ; that is, were long overdue ; but they came in one after another, as the weather moderated. And so of any great ocean steamer, not until every vestige of hope is gone will she be treated as a lost ship.

#### THE GREAT MAGYAR.

IN FOUR PARTS. CHAPTER I.

THE rightful owner of this title is not Louis Kossuth, to whom it was assigned in 1849 by the enthusiasm of the English and American public. It is Count Stephen Szechenyi, whose imperishable claims to it are embodied in the enduring monuments of his beneficent genius, and on whom it has been deliberately conferred by the grateful admiration of his countrymen.

It happened to the writer of the following sketch to be present on the occasion when Louis Kossuth was introduced, as The

Great Magyar, to the American Senate. The celebrated Daniel Webster, who, as secretary for the state department, then conducted the foreign affairs of the American Union, was subsequently invited to preside at a banquet given to Kossuth. He declined the invitation, on the ground that it would not become the representative of the foreign relations of the Union, to propose toasts in honour of a man charged with high treason against a sovereign with whose government the United States were on terms of peace and amity. Mr. Seward represented to Mr. Webster that his refusal to attend the Kossuth banquet would cost him the loss of the Presidency for which he was then a candidate. This argument prevailed. The invitation was accepted : and "The Independence of Hungary," coupled with the name of "Louis Kossuth, the Great Magyar," was proposed by the American minister for foreign affairs. We ourselves, *calidà juventà*, had what we then esteemed the high honour of being presented to the pseudo Great Magyar, at the hotel where he was sumptuously lodged and boarded at the national expense, together with his fellow-refugees ; nor has time entirely effaced the vivid impression made upon our youthful fancy by the quaint costumes, and wild, unwashed faces of those hairy and hungry heroes. The quantity of champagne and tobacco which they consumed in the course of a month appeared prodigious, when their hotel bill was presented for payment to the nation.

Meanwhile, broken in health and hope, and tortured by the most terrible martyrdom which a morbidly sensitive conscience can inflict on a proud nature and a powerful intellect, the real Great Magyar was languishing in an Austrian madhouse, of which he had become the voluntary inmate. Many years afterwards we visited that establishment. Times and things had greatly changed since 1848. M. Schmerling had produced his new nostrum for the salvation of the Austrian empire ; consisting of a central legislature, to which the whole kingdom of Hungary refused to send deputies. Some of the ablest organs of the English press were extolling the wisdom of the new political régime in Austria. But, already, every man adequately conversant with the social and historical conditions of this complicated empire perceived its unpractical and futile character. Every month rendered more and more apparent the necessity of promptly pacifying Hungary, and the utter impossibility of inducing her to swallow M. Schmerling's

constitutional sedative. It was then that Count Rechberg, the imperial chancellor, sought an interview with the recluse of Döbling; who submitted to his excellency the detailed project of a complete policy for the constitutional government of Hungary, in harmony with the rights and interests of the Austrian crown. "Count Stephen Szechenyi," said Count Rechberg, when he returned from this interview, "has done well to select a lunatic asylum for his place of residence. His ideas are purely chimerical." The fortunes of Austria as well as Hungary, divorced from each other, grew rapidly worse and worse; and not long afterwards Count Stephen Szechenyi perished by his own hand. Had he lived but a very few years longer, he would have had the satisfaction of contemplating the complete realisation of those ideas which were considered so chimerical in 1862.

The works of Count Stephen Szechenyi are now eagerly read; and a literature, consisting of notices and biographies of the Great Magyar, has sprung into existence. A detailed journal of the daily life of the recluse of Döbling has been preserved, and lately published by an intelligent witness of its sufferings and its hopes.\* Still more recently, one of the most accomplished men of letters in France, M. Saint-René Taillandier, has devoted to the character and career of Count Stephen Szechenyi a considerable portion of his interesting work on Bohemia and Hungary. By the aid of these ample materials, and of others derived from private sources, we now propose to reconstruct the image of the Great Magyar.

Stephen Szechenyi was born at Vienna, September 21, 1792. He was therefore only seventeen years of age when, in 1809, he fought, in the Austrian army, against the French. In 1815 he was one of the gayest, idlest, and most popular, of those young officers who helped the fine ladies of Vienna to amuse themselves while the great Congress was remaking the map of Europe. Shortly afterwards he started on the grand tour which was, at that time, an important part of every young nobleman's education. After travelling over the East, and passing years in Greece, he visited Italy, France, and England. He ever afterwards spoke of this country with the most affectionate and reverent admiration; and, throughout the whole of his political career, nothing is more constantly evident, than the

powerful impression made upon his mind by the industrial activity and good sense of the English people. The death of his father, Count Franz Szechenyi, recalled him in 1820 to his own country, and placed him, at the age of twenty-eight, in possession of estates which have since become very valuable and the representation of an illustrious family. At that time the chief rivalry between the great nobles of Hungary and those of Austria was a rivalry in pleasure, frivolity, and fashion. The prizes for which they contended were those of the boudoir, the salon, and the coulisses. The wealth of the magnates of Hungary was lavished on the amusements of Vienna. Pesth was a miserable provincial town. The Hungarian language was despised by the Hungarian nobility. None of them spoke it, and it is doubtful if many of them knew it. Latin was the language for state papers and serious affairs; German and French were the languages for polite society; Hungarian was the language for the stables and the pothouse. One day (it was in the year 1825) the Diet of Presburg was engaged in discussing the question of founding an academy for the cultivation of the national language. "It is impossible," said one of the speakers,\* "except by immense pecuniary sacrifices on the part of the great proprietors. For the establishment of such an institution three things are indispensable. The first is money, the second is money, the third is money." As the speaker resumed his seat, a man standing among the spectators in the place reserved for the public, rose and said; "Gentlemen, I have no vote in this assembly, nor am I one of the great proprietors. But I possess estates, and, if an institution can be established for the revival of the Hungarian language, and for providing for the children of our race a national education, I will at once devote to that institution one year of my whole income." The gift was sixty thousand florins (about six thousand pounds). "Who is it?" was the cry from all parts of the house. It was Count Stephen Szechenyi, only known as one of the best dancers and boldest riders at Vienna. So instantaneous and so great was the enthusiasm, that in less than a quarter of an hour the academy was founded.

Stephen Szechenyi was still in the military service of Austria; and Latin was still the only language spoken in the Hun-

\* Graf Stephan Szechenyi's staatsmanische Laufbahn seine letzten Lebensjahre in der Döblinger Irrenanstalt, und sein Tod. By Aurel von Kecskemethy. Pesth. 1866.

\* It was Mr. Paul Nagy.

garian Diets. The young count took his seat in the Diet of 1826, wearing the uniform of an officer of hussars. It will be difficult for our readers, at this day, either to imagine, or to understand, how great was the scandal, and how vehement the indignation, when he rose, in this assembly, to address his countrymen in their native tongue. It was the first time that Hungarian had been spoken in an Hungarian Diet. The whole of the Court party, and the immense majority of the Chamber were furious. The count received, the same day, a peremptory order to rejoin his regiment without a moment's delay. He replied by placing his resignation in the hands of his colonel. At the next session of the Diet he appeared dressed in the national costume, and continued to address the Chamber in the national tongue. The indignation of the Magnates, the alarm of the Bureaux, the anger of the Court, at this innovation, enabled us to appreciate the wisdom of the excessive caution and patient tact, with which the regenerator of Hungary now began to feel his way, step by step, towards the ultimate attainment of the object he had resolved to achieve. He founded the Casino of Pesth; a sort of conversational lounge for young and old, modelled after the fashion of our English clubs. He started races, jockey-clubs, and various similar means and pretexts for social gatherings. The eyes of the official Argus winked and dozed again. Meanwhile, by such unpretentious means, the count (a consummate man of the world) was gradually drawing the men and minds of his own class and country into a focus on which his personal influence could exert the strongest private pressure. In the same spirit he published in 1831 a little pamphlet, *Magyar Sinhaz*, on the educational functions of the stage, written in Hungarian. In the following year the subject of this pamphlet was taken up by the Diet, and made the object of a Bill, which encountered much opposition, and was not passed before 1836. In 1837 the Magyar Theatre (the Great Magyar's first great creation) was opened at Pesth.

Meanwhile, the count had sounded his first open war-cry against the ancienne régime; not a frothy proclamation of the vices of the Vienna cabinet and the virtues of the Hungarian nation, but a vigorous attack upon the whole feudal system of Hungarian society. "It is not Austria that oppresses you," cried the author to his countrymen, "it is your own Gothic

prejudices and mouldy institutions. No human power can arrest the life of a nation, if the nation be worthy to live. Your regeneration is in your own hands." The excitement occasioned by this publication was immense. Feudalism had hitherto been so strongly associated by the Hungarians with the cause of their national independence, that the condemnation of the one was regarded as an insult to the other; and the Great Magyar was accused by his own countrymen of high treason against the ancient liberties of Hungary. Count Joseph Dessewffy, a Conservative of high spirit and great ability, undertook to defend patriarchal tradition from the author of Credit; whom he denounced as a mischievous iconoclast, in a work entitled Analysis. Szechenyi replied to the challenge in a book which he called The World. Dessewffy, overwhelmed by the tremendous antagonist whom he had invited into the lists, retired from the conflict; and the government, which had hitherto been disposed to view, if not with complete satisfaction, at least with malicious amusement, the discomfiture of an old enemy of its own—the ancient Magyarism—now took the alarm. For it began to perceive that this controversy, past and future, was being watched with ominous interest by a stranger of uncouth appearance, whose attendance had been invoked, as umpire, by the Great Magyar. This new comer was the greatest Magyar of all. It was the Magyar People.

The count's next work, The Stadium, was prohibited by the Austrian censor, and only found its way into Hungary from Bucharest. This work contains the sketch of a system of laws, which are now the basis of Hungarian society. Meanwhile, it was not merely with his pen that the Great Magyar was at work. He knew that example is the best teacher. He had been preaching to his countrymen the magnificent commercial capabilities of their great natural highway, the Danube. "But the Danube is not navigable," said they. "Your fault. You can make it navigable." "Pooh! you forget the Iron Gates," was the invariable reply. The count's answer to this objection was characteristic. On the quay at Pesth he built a little vessel. He launched it, and, pledging himself to steer it safely past the cataracts, embarked. Soon afterwards the whole of Hungary was ringing with applause of the successful navigator. Prince Metternich himself was carried away by the contagious enthusiasm. The success of this

experiment enabled Szechenyi to secure the assistance of English capital; the splendid bridge of Pesth, the tunnel of Buda, the rectification of the course of the Theis, and the explosion of the Iron Gates, are imperishable records of his energetic genius.

## CHAPTER II.

Amongst the Magyar nobility, whose feudal supremacy was menaced and shaken by the reform movement which had been initiated in Hungary by Szechenyi, was a certain Baron Vesselényi, who resolved to obtain from personal popularity the influence he could no longer command from hereditary privilege. Vesselényi, the descendant of an ancient Palatin, was the owner of vast estates, and a seat in the Transylvanian as well as the Hungarian Diets. In character and person, this man was an exact antithesis of the great rival whom, for a time, it was his evil fortune to eclipse. Szechenyi, eminently high-bred in appearance and refined in manners, was a sincere Liberal in all his feelings as well as opinions, and his temperament was naturally gentle. He was cautious, temporising, reticent; always preferring conciliation to violence, and compromise to conflict; an initiative thinker, with the patience of a practical statesman; a man of heart, with the tact of a man of the world; a sincere patriot, with the acquired self-restraint of a diplomatist. Vesselényi, with the rude bearing of democracy, combined the supercilious spirit of the old noblesse. Violent, impulsive, huge of stature, slovenly in dress, with the shaggy mane of Mirabeau, and the reckless animal spirits of Danton, men called him the Transylvanian giant.

He deserved the title. He had the limbs of a pugilist, the head of an ogre, and the heart of a wild beast. That head of his was said to be the strongest, the shaggiest, and the blackest head in Hungary. In order that we may not again have to interrupt the thread of our narrative, we will here sketch in a few words the political career of this Hungarian Gracchus. The Transylvanian Diet of 1835, carried beyond bounds by the impetuosity of his insubordinate eloquence, was dissolved by the Austrian government, and he himself was prosecuted for the publication of a seditious harangue. The brutality of his conduct towards his peasants, however, subjected him to a more serious prosecution on the charge of cruelty and personal violence. Condemned on this charge in Transylvania, he removed into Hungary. There, exasperated by the loss of a considerable portion

of his fortune, he endeavoured to revolutionise some of the comitats, and was tried for high treason; the charge being founded on one of his addresses to the comitat of Szathmar. On this charge he was condemned, and thrown into prison. The lower chamber of the Diet, opposed by the chamber of Magnates, in which Szechenyi still retained a great influence, protested seventeen times against the arrest of Vesselényi; and to this protest may be referred the commencement of that hostility between the two chambers, which prepared the anarchy of 1848. The government, however, satisfied with having established the culpability of Vesselényi before the tribunals, released him from prison, and he retired to Graefenberg. He was comprised in the general amnesty of 1840; and a course of the water cure at Graefenberg appears to have somewhat calmed his effervescent temperament; for we hear and see no more of him until 1848. Then, like a decrepit vulture, recalled to the battlefield by the scent of carrion, and the scream of his kindred predatory fowl, the old giant reappears at Vienna in the factious and fatal deputation of September; blind, broken, dying; and with little of him left but his inextinguishable spirit of mischief.

In 1836, this man became the idol of the crowd. Szechenyi at this time almost entirely withdrew from that political life which his own genius had evoked into activity. To the theatre of his vast industrial undertakings he now confined his activities. There he was incessantly busy; planning, creating, organising. Daily some new obstacle was surmounted, some fresh resource was developed, some further step was made good in the peaceful path of material progress. Meanwhile the popular glitter of the Transylvanian Giant was destined to be, in its turn, obscured by the rising star of a greater genius: a greater genius, but scarcely a wiser man.

In the Hungarian Diets, freedom of speech had always been practically unlimited. But there were no public reports of their debates. About this time, that is to say in 1836, certain Hungarian Magnates resolved to start a journal of which the sole function should be to supply that deficiency. Some of these noblemen had been in the habit of employing, on matters connected with their parliamentary business, a young lawyer, who earned by jobs of this kind a moderate subsistence. Favourably impressed by his intelligence and activity, they selected him for the editorship and practical management

of the new journal. The young lawyer, poor, ambitious, and energetic, soon organised a small staff of scribes whose daily report of the debates in the Diet was sent in lithograph to the comitats. The Austrian government prohibited and seized the paper. Undismayed, the editor and his patrons increased their staff of scribes; and the journal continued to appear in manuscript. When the session was over, the editor, instead of suspending his journal, devoted it to similar reports of the deliberations of the comitats. These reports were of a very inflammatory character. The editor was arrested and imprisoned. The government did not venture to bring him to open trial, but he remained in prison three years. At the end of that time, a general amnesty restored him to liberty; and he immediately entered the lower chamber of the Diet, bringing with him a concentrated hatred of the Austrian government, and remarkable talents for giving effect to it. In a short time he was among the chiefs of the radical opposition in the lower chamber. The influence rapidly acquired by his astonishing eloquence he grasped with a resolute hand, and a vindictive determination to convert into a revolutionary force the liberal movement created by Szechenyi. The name of this man was Louis Kossuth. Great reputations are rapidly worn out by societies which are passing through a revolutionary period; as men wear out their boots on forced marches. Doubtless the greatest benefit conferred by Count Szechenyi on his country was a little group of noble characters formed by him in his own image; men who, like Deak and Eotvas, are at this moment worthily continuing his salutary policy and beneficent example. But the public mind of Hungary, in 1840, was too feverish to follow the orderly leadership of such men. Kossuth (who, having performed nothing was ready to promise everything) became the idol of the hour. And then, for the first and last time in the whole of his blameless career, the Great Magyar was for a moment untrue to his own convictions. No eloquence could disguise from his penetrating intellect the fundamental fallacies of Kossuth's revolutionary doctrine. But he seems, for a moment, to have been intimidated by the overwhelming popularity of the new demagogue; and, only feebly deprecating the form of that doctrine, to have virtually implied his assent to the substance of it. Kossuth was fully entitled to reply, as he did, with indignant impatience: "If we

are agreed as to the substance, it is puerile to quarrel about the form. Revolutions are not to be carried on by polite phrases."

Szechenyi fully recognised the vexatious and obstructive character of the connexion, such as it had latterly been, between Hungary and Austria; but he no less clearly perceived that the total severance of that connexion would, even were it practicable, be fatal. His object was, not to sever Hungary from the Austrian empire, but to secure to Hungary the magnificent position which he perceived her to be capable of assuming in that empire; and, by means of that empire, in Europe. His constant effort was to bring about a better understanding between the Hungarian people and the Austrian government. In one of his great speeches he says: "Fairly to appreciate the acts of the government, we must endeavour to place ourselves at its point of view. We shall then perceive that much which we are wont to attribute to Machiavellian craft, is only due to deplorable ignorance. Similarly, it is to be wished that the government should be enabled and induced to place itself more often at an Hungarian point of view—the point of view which is furnished by our constitutional régime. Otherwise, the most legitimate preoccupation on behalf of our rights will be misconstrued as seditious!"

Again, he clearly perceived that the true destinies of Hungary could only be worked out by developing the splendid natural resources of the country, and the culture and character of its people. "I have awakened my countrymen," he used to say, "in order that they may walk upright, and conduct themselves like men; not in order that they may throw themselves out of the window." How much he achieved in two short years towards the regeneration and development of Hungary is amazing. He found the national language all but unknown; he made it universal throughout Hungary, and obliged the Austrian government to adopt it as the medium of all official intercourse with its Hungarian subjects. At his creative call, a national literature and a national drama—those two great agents of culture—sprang into active life. "When," says M. Saint René Taillandier, "we compare the moral and intellectual culture of the Hungarians previous to 1830, with what they have become under the influence of Count Szechenyi, the result seems scarcely credible." "Few men," wrote M. Langsdorff, in 1848, "have ever effected more for the welfare of

their country than this illustrious citizen. The life of Hungary for the last twenty years has its source in him." All his instincts were practical; and of the many enterprises in which he engaged the industry of his country, none were chimerical. Kossuth, on the other hand, imagined that the independence of Hungary could be secured by severing her connexion with Austria; and that an inland state could be converted into a maritime power, by throwing public money into the Adriatic from the little port of Fiume.

It is to the genius of Szechenyi that Hungary owes her present commanding position as the governing power of a great empire, of whose future destinies she is mistress. It is to the genius of Szechenyi that the world is indebted for the unimpeded circulation of merchandise, passengers, and ideas, from Ratisbon to Constantinople along that great water highway which, in the event of any general maritime war, would be the only way open to the commerce of the east and west. He had to deal with a suspicious, powerful, and obstructive government; which by tact and patience he converted into an ally, securing its effective co-operation in the cause of practical reform.\* Kossuth had to deal with a weak, but friendly and compliant government; and he upset it, as he upset everything else. Szechenyi found the nobility of Hungary entirely exempted from taxation, and the peasantry burdened not only by the whole of the public imposts, but also by a multiplicity of feudal obligations. Without proclaiming a war of classes, he persuaded the nobility to submit to taxation, and spontaneously surrendered some of their most obnoxious privileges. The equitable redemption of the remainder was in a fair way of legal settlement when all practical legislation was suspended by the revolution which Kossuth had invoked.

One last and most important particular remains to be mentioned, in which Szechenyi's opinions remain to this day far in advance of those of his countrymen—far in advance, indeed, of the opinions which still prevail in England respecting the treatment of alien races. The great difficulty of Hungary, or, more properly speaking, of the Magyar dominion in Hungary, was, and is, a population of more than

eight hundred thousand Slavs, occupying the whole southern portion of Hungary, from the Drave to that point where the Danube, not far from Belgrade, suddenly changes its course. These Slavs, whose chief representatives in Hungary are the Croats, differ in origin, language, character, and religion from the Magyars. But the kindred families of their race (one of the most numerous in Europe) extend far beyond the limits of Hungary, occupying the whole of Servia, and the greater part of Bohemia; not to mention that vast empire which stretches across Europe from the White to the Black Sea.

Now, Szechenyi, alone of all his countrymen, saw two things very clearly. First, that the perfect amalgamation if possible, but in any case the harmonious co-existence and undisturbed co-operation of the Magyar and Slavonic populations of Hungary, is absolutely necessary for the safety and unity of the kingdom. Secondly, that the supremacy of the Magyar element in Hungary could only be secured by conciliation and political tact. While his natural justice and humanity revolted from the idea of forcibly suppressing the Slavonic nationality in Hungary, his strong common sense enabled him to perceive how plausible a pretext any such attempt would afford the Austrian government, for crippling the development of the Magyar nationality by reverting to its old policy of *divide et impera*, and setting the Croats against the Hungarians. In one of his speeches, a speech which might be studied with advantage by every Englishman who shares the inherited responsibility of governing Ireland and India, there are some words which appear to us to be of rare political sagacity and moral elevation. "What method shall we adopt for communicating to the different races established on Hungarian soil the sentiment of our own nationality? There is only one way in which we can, or ought to, induce others to recognise our superiority, and that is by making ourselves their moral and intellectual superiors. Remember, therefore, that your salvation depends, not on the assertion of political power, but the cultivation of personal virtue. The success of the national policy depends on the character and conduct of each individual. Above all things it is necessary to acquire the gift of pleasing, and to cultivate the faculty of attracting, others. The secret of power is sympathy. We may impose the Magyar language upon unwilling lips,

\* Prince Metternich used to say, "the Hungarians imagine that they have invented the Danube." He was, however, one of the first shareholders in the company formed by Szechenyi for its navigation.

[April 9, 1870.]

we may thrust the Magyar costume upon alien races, and float our national colours from one end of Hungary to the other; but pray what shall we have gained if we have not gained the hearts and affections of those whom we aspire to rule? And, trust me, the art of gaining hearts is the art of governing men. He who lacks sympathy lacks wisdom; and we are unfit for the noble task of government if we are unable to respect in others the sentiments and aspirations which we respect in ourselves; most unfit for such a task if, in dealing with sensitive and generous adversaries, enthusiastic, like ourselves, for the traditions of their race, we treat with supercilious contempt emotions which we have not endeavoured to understand."

Unhappily for Hungary, these wise warnings were neglected. One of the first uses to which Kossuth put the power entrusted to him by the Revolution, was the forcible extinction of the Slavonic nationality in Hungary. In the name of the Hungarians, who had so recently extorted from Austria the free use of their own language, he prohibited to the Slavs the use of *their* language—a language to which they were passionately attached. The treatment of the Slavs in Hungary by Kossuth was, in almost every respect, worse than the treatment of the Hungarians by Metternich and Schwartzenberg.

If Count Széchenyi's loyalty to his own principles had been for a moment shaken by the enthusiasm which greeted the enunciation of a policy essentially antagonistic to them, it was *only* for a moment. In 1847 he addressed to the nation and its new tribune these remarkable words:

"The nation will be shaken to pieces. And in that day the faithful and serious servants of her cause, remembering how great was the height to which she might have risen, and beholding how deep is the abyss into which she has been thrust, will have no refuge from despair, save in prayer to God. And you, Kossuth, you in whose heart and honour I will yet believe, what anguish must be yours when, amidst the ruins of a monomaniac's hopes, your conscience compels you to make this confession: 'I believed myself filled with the wisdom which establishes states; but I was filled only with the dreams of a disordered imagination. I deemed myself a

prophet, yet have I foreseen nothing, and failed even to comprehend the simplest events which were passing under my eyes. In my infatuation I mistook myself for a creative genius. I was but a feverish schemer. I aspired to command others. I could not govern myself. It was my boast to be the benefactor of my country. It is my shame to have been only the puppet of all her popular passions. I proclaimed myself the Messiah of a new political gospel, and I was but a well-meaning and unwise philanthropist, encouraging idleness and misery by gratuitous distributions of bread-crumbs. With the power which should have regenerated and consolidated a nation, I have but organised a huge national hospital.' When that miserable hour is come (and come be sure it will; for the imaginary world you are now building upon chaos has no more reality than the mirage), what consolation will remain to you in the memory of your work? O hasten—in the sacred name of our common country, I beseech you—hasten to leave this perilous path of revolutionary agitation! You will not hear me? The voice of popular favour is loud and sweet! Well, then, when that voice has become the voice of those that mourn, you shall not be able to assert, 'the entire nation shared the error of my dreams.' Here and now, I summon you to remember in that hour, that one voice of expostulation was raised, and raised in time, but that you would not listen to its warning cry."

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